

CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES & PROCEDURES



FRANCIS STREET PARISH

Child Protection Statement

We in the Parish of Francis Street value and encourage the participation of children and young people in all parish activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional and social development. We recognise the dignity and rights of all children and are committed to ensuring their protection and support. In keeping with this we will work to do all in our power to create safe environments for our children and young people in order to ensure their protection and enable their full participation in the life of the Church.

Glossary of Terms

Child

A person under the age of 18.

Worker

Clergy, parish staff, children's and youth group leaders and all volunteers and temporary workers who at any time share in the parish's ministry with children.

Parish

Francis Street Parish, Dublin 8.

Diocesan Designated Person

In each Diocese a Director of Child Protection is appointed to liaise effectively with and provide information and support to all parishes within the diocese on all issues relating to child protection and child welfare and to ensure that appropriate steps are taken.

Parish Child Protection Representative (CPR)

A Parish Child Protection Representative is appointed to:

- Promote awareness of the Church's child protection policies.
- Ensure all parish activities and/or groups dealing with or involving children are compliant with parish child protection procedures
- Ensure that the public has ready access to contact details for the Diocesan Designated Person
- Ensure appropriate records are obtained and maintained
- Facilitate anyone in the parish in bringing an allegation or suspicion of child abuse to the attention of the Diocesan Designated Person
- Report all allegations or suspicions of child abuse to the appropriate civil authorities and to inform the Diocesan Designated Person

Child Abuse

Child abuse is any action (or lack of), which endangers or impairs a child's physical, psychological or emotional well-being and development. In this respect, it can be defined as physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, and can also include incidents of neglect or bullying.

Our Child Protection Policy is based on the following Guiding Principles:

- Children are people now and their childhood is valuable in its own right.
- Each child is to be affirmed as a gift of God and has an absolute right to dignity of life and bodily integrity, which must be respected, nurtured and protected.
- Children have a right to be heard and taken seriously, taking account of their age and level of understanding. They should be consulted and involved in relation to all matters and decisions that affect their lives.
- Children have a right to care and support and to be raised in environments free from abuse or neglect, with good role models whom they can fully trust, and who will care for and nurture their spiritual and physical maturity.
- The Church has a corporate responsibility to operate effective systems to assure the protection of children. This includes having a proper recruitment, formation and training strategy in place and working cooperatively with other agencies in the best interest of the child.
- All personnel must be aware of their duty both to prevent child abuse and to report concerns or suspicions.
- Every action and procedure must consider the overall needs of the child.
- Actions taken to protect the child should not in themselves be abusive or cause the child unnecessary distress.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting the child and regard for the rights of carers and adults; but where there is a conflict, the children's welfare must come first.

Child Protection Procedures

Selection Process

Most people who apply to work with children and young people in the Church are well motivated and potentially suitable for the various tasks involved. It is important however to ensure that this is, in fact, the case. To facilitate this:

- All workers/volunteers must sign a Garda Vetting form as well as the 'Declaration from all staff and volunteers working with children.'

- The Parish Child Protection Team will check with the referees named therein. If there is any doubt as to someone's suitability the team will consult appropriately.
- All workers/volunteers will be required to read the Parish Child Protection Policy and to comply with it.

Code of Conduct

- Young people will be treated with courtesy, respect and dignity.
- Young people will not be permitted to consume alcohol or smoke while participating in activities.
- There will be an adequate ratio of leaders to young people at all times.
- Leaders should not work alone with young people.
- Every effort will be made to ensure that when working with mixed gender groups staff and adult volunteers of appropriate gender will work in pairs.
- Leaders(18+) will not consume alcohol or smoke while having responsibility for or in the presence of young people.
- Inappropriate language or sexually suggestive comments by young people or leaders will not be permitted.
- Physical contact between young people and leaders will be appropriate at all times. Leaders will not engage in rough play or undertake any task of a personal nature with/for young people except in cases of medical necessity when the welfare of the child depends on it.
- Leaders will always engage with young people in an open manner and care will be taken not to show favouritism.
- There will be clearly designated leaders within each group with whom young people can speak about their experience and raise any concerns should they arise.
- The Parish will have a designated person assigned to whose immediate attention all concerns and/or complaints can be brought.
- The designated person will respond promptly to all concerns and liaise with the required civil and Church authorities.
- All concerns and/or complaints will be followed through in a timely and efficient manner.
- The Parish will have a specific code of conduct for all away trips including pilgrimages, day trips and incentive events. This code will be made known to the young people and leaders.

Health and Safety

Adequate and appropriate supervision must be provided for all activities. Arriving/Leaving procedures for activities must be explicit. Each group will ensure that it is aware of and compliant with the parish Health and Safety Policy.

Trips Away from Home

- All trips, including day trips, overnight stays and holidays, need careful advance planning, including adequate provision for safety in regard to transport, facilities, activities and emergencies. Adequate insurance must be in place.
- Written consent by a parent or guardian specifically for each trip and related activities must be obtained well in advance.
- A copy of the itinerary and contact telephone numbers must be made available to parents and guardians.
- Adequate gender-appropriate supervision must be provided.
- In particular, for overnight trips care must be given to sleeping arrangements ensuring the privacy of children is respected at all times. At least two adults must be present in dormitories and it is not wise for any adult to be alone with one child at any time. In an emergency situation if an adult considers it necessary to be alone with a child they should: (a) immediately inform another adult in a position of responsibility and (b) make a diary note of the circumstances.
- A person from each group will be assigned to deal with complaints and refer any allegations to the parish CPR.

Record Keeping

Parental consent will be obtained for participation in all parish based youth activities. It is advisable to keep a record of all adults present at any parish organized youth activity. Accident/incident forms will be maintained. Volunteer application/declaration forms and Garda Vetting Forms will be used in the selection process for all workers.

Disciplinary Procedures

When dealing with disciplinary issues it is recommended that more than one person be present. Record in writing (using Accident/Incident report form) a description of what happened, the individuals involved and how the situation was resolved.

Policy Review

This policy document will be reviewed in its entirety each year and amended appropriately if required. The review process will be coordinated by the CPT.

Handling a disclosure: Listen – Record – Report

Concerns/Suspicious

Should a worker have any concerns or suspicions in relation to child abuse the worker must:

- Immediately contact the Parish CPR to report concerns/suspicious.
- Keep concerns/suspicious confidential

The worker must NOT:

- Discuss concerns/suspicious with any other leader, adult or child; including the parent/guardian of the child.
- Delay in reporting concerns/suspicious
- Start/attempt to investigate concerns/suspicious

Disclosure

Should someone make a disclosure to a worker in relation to child abuse the worker must:

- Stay calm
- Listen
- Accept
- Reassure that the issue will be taken seriously and correct procedures followed
- Record in writing to the CPR
- Report to the Parish CPR or the appropriate civil authorities

The worker must NOT:

- Panic
- Promise to keep secrets
- Asking leading questions
- Make the child repeat the story un-necessarily
- Delay
- Start to investigate
- Make a judgment

Contacts

**Child Safeguarding & Protection Representative Francis Street:
014530387**

Dublin Diocese

Child Safeguarding & Protection Service

Holy Cross Diocesan Centre
Clonliffe College
Dublin 3
Ireland
01-8360314

Ms Julie McCullough
Child Protection Officer
01 836 0314
(+ 353 1 836 0314 outside Ireland)
Email:
julie.mccullough@dublindiocese.ie

Gardaí

Kevin Street Garda Station,
Dublin 8.

01-6669400
www.garda.ie

Childline: 1800 66 66 66

Towards Healing: 1800-303-416

Dublin Diocesan Designated Person

Mr. Andrew Fagan
(Director and Designated Person)
Tel: 01 836 0314
(+ 353 1 836 0314 outside Ireland)
Email:
andrew.fagan@dublindiocese.ie
www.csps.dublindiocese.ie

Ms Loraine Byrne
Safeguarding Officer
01 836 0314
(+ 353 1 836 0314 outside Ireland)
Email:
loraine.byrne@dublindiocese.ie

Child and Family Agency

Dublin South Central,
Carnegie Centre,
21 - 25 Lord Edward Street,
Dublin 2. Tel 01 6486555
am.dscdw@tusla.ie

The Samaritans: 116123

One in Four: 01-6624070

**Connect
National Adult Counselling Service:
1800 47 74 77**

DECLARATION FROM ALL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Confidential

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel. No. (Daytime) _____ (Evening) _____

Occupation: _____

Please supply the names, addresses, telephone number and position of two people (non relatives)

that you know well and who can supply us with a reference:

Name: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____ Address: _____

Tel No: _____ Tel No: _____

Position: _____ Position: _____

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a Caution or of a

Bound Over Order?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes please state nature and dates of offences:

Nature of offence Date of offence

I declare that nothing in my personal or professional background deems me unsuitable for working with children. I will abide by the Parish Child Protection Policy.

Signed: _____ Date _____

FOR PARISH USE ONLY

Checked by Phone Visit Letter

Checked by: _____ Date: _____

Parental Consent Form

Proposed activity: _____

Coordinator: _____

Contact Number: _____

Name of young person: _____

Name of Parent/guardian: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone No: _____

Mobile Phone No: _____

If unavailable please contact: _____

Relevant information (e.g. medical conditions, special needs, dietary requirements)

Name of Young Person’s GP: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone No: _____

In the event of illness, having parental responsibility for the above named child, I give permission for medical treatment to be administered where considered necessary by a first aider or by suitably qualified medical practitioners. If I cannot be contacted and my child should require emergency hospital treatment, I authorize a qualified medical practitioner to provide emergency treatment or medications.

I have read and understand the activity outline accompanying this parental consent form. I am satisfied that I have been sufficiently informed about the activity, that I have sufficient contact details. I agree to allow the young person named above to take part in the outlined activity.

I am aware that Holy Redeemer parish has developed a child protection policy and that it is committed to ensure the safety of children.

I confirm that all details are correct to the best of my knowledge and I am able to give parental consent for my child to participate in the proposed activity:

Signature of parent or guardian: _____

Print name: _____

Date: _____

Parish General Complaints Form

All complaints arising during a church related activity (with the exception of complaints about child abuse) should try to be resolved by discussion between the parties involved. If this is not possible, the complainant should complete the details below and submit it to the Priest In Charge.

Name of Complainant:

Contact details :

Details of complaint:

(use separate sheet if needed)

For office Use Only:

Complaint form received by :

Date form received :

Actions to be taken and by whom :

Complainant Signature:

Date:
